

The Anchorage Amateur

December, 1992

Anchorage Amateur Radio club Newsletter
Editor - Harvey Rookus, NL7DK

Vol. ?? No. 12

At The Jan 8th Club Meeting

John Lawson
NL7NC will
demonstrate 9600
Baud UHF Packet

Inside This Issue

Page 2 -

Clean Out Utility
Lines
Invitation To 3rd
Radiosport Contest

Page 3 -

Minutes From
11/6/92 Meeting
Wedding To
Remember

Page 4 -

T'was The Night
Before Contest
Swap N Shop

Page 6 -

Radio Etiquette

Page 7 -

Club Activities

Have You Bought
Your December
Raffle Tickets
From Lil, NL7DL
Yet???

Christmas Party December 4th

The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club's 1992 Christmas Party will be this coming Friday, December 4th at 6PM in the Atwood Center Cafeteria on the Alaska Pacific University Campus. Set-up is at 5PM.

The cafeteria is located on the second floor of the West (or Center) of the three buildings in the Atwood Center. The Center is the building complex at the north end of the parking lot we use for the monthly meetings in the Carr-Gottstein Building. Talk-in frequency will be 146.94/34.

Our Christmas Party dinner is being catered by the University, however, AARC Secretary NL7DL, Lil Marvin, asks that

Novices bring vegetables and Technicians please bring a salad. Generals should bring a hot dish. Advanced should bring hors d'oeuvres and Extras are to bring desserts. She tried to get out of Extras bringing a dessert since she's upgraded to that level, but we wouldn't let her (Editor's note: The M & M company will resume shipment of M&Ms to Anchorage in light of Lil's surrender on the Extra's issue).



THERE WILL BE NO BUSINESS CONDUCTED AT THE DECEMBER MEETING! Anyone attempting to violate that rule will be asked to bring it up at the December Board meeting and will lead to a request that the violator sing a Christmas carol for the club.

(Continued on page 6)

November AARC Program Log

Prime Cable's Technical Duo Speak On Interference

Our guest speakers at the November meeting, Gary Haynes and Dave Smith, gave us a history of the technical side of Anchorage's cable system and discussed interference problems with the standing room only audience.

Gary, who is the Vice President in charge of technical operations for Prime, spoke first about the system's technical history and then Dave, Technician Supervisor for Prime, spoke about interference problems.

Prime Cable purchased the system from Sonic Cable in 1989. The system began in the late 70's when Multivisions, a Multi-Point Distribution System (MDS) operator, received a contract to wire Elmendorf and Fort Richardson for cable television. The

bases have the capability of over-riding the system for emergency announcements and to present training programs.

Multivisions applied for and received a Certificate of Public Convenience for Anchorage to operate a cable system. With the certificate in hand, the company proceeded to build about 400 miles of trunk and feeder lines. The original system was an RCA turnkey system for 400 Mhz of bandwidth.

The system was sold to Pacific Telecom in 1983. Pacific Telecom extended the system to South Anchorage and Eagle River. The Eagle River extension was

(Continued On Page 5)

Cleaning Up Down On The Antenna Farm

By: Neil Thalaker, KL7BGI

Letter to The Editor:

This is a story that even I can't believe. For years I have had wires/cables running thru my yard to other people's houses. There is a utility pole at the back of my lot near the back fence. From it radiated three fone lines, two cable TV lines and two power lines to my neighbors. In addition my power line goes to my house. So out of eight cables going thru my antenna farm, one went to my house. The other seven went thru my yard to neighbors homes. My fone line is buried.

My antenna farm is modest. I have an 80 and 40 meter dipole fed in parallel. All these utility lines keep my farm from being less modest. Until recently, the south end of the 80 meter dipole near the fence was bent away from my neighbor's fone lines because of telephone interference. It didn't do any good. Once I called the fone company and suggested they bury my neighbor's fone line to reduce the interference. I was told "it would cost me". At different times someone would climb around on the all purpose utility pole in back and a new cable would appear, sometimes strung casually by various routes, like draped thru the trees. A fone call to the cable TV company would result in a slight improvement.

Recently I noticed a cable about eight feet off the ground. I did a little more foning than usual and learned that it might be possible to have all of these offending lines relocated out of my yard!!

I'm not sure which local office told me, but I was informed that if I wrote to each utility requesting they remove their stuff from my yard that I "would be surprised by the results". I was also told to send info copies of my letters to the Anchorage Ombudsman and to the Alaska Public Utilities Commission. I was instructed to draw a picture/diagram/sketch of my property showing all the cables and wires and anything that seemed appropriate like the house, trees, fence, direction of north, etc.

I did all of this with the help of my computer after thinking about it/procrastinating for a few days.

So far, the results have been impressive. The fone lines and the cable TV lines and one power line are history. The remaining power lines' days are numbered. Two of the utility companies have responded by letter and all three have been out to survey the situation. A key factor seems to be sending a copy of each letter to the Public Utilities Commission.

(Continued on page 4)

The Anchorage Amateur is the monthly newsletter of the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club. Permission is granted for reproducing articles appearing in the Anchorage Amateur that do not indicate a copyright separate from the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club. Letters to the Editor and articles for publication should be submitted to Harvey Rookus, NL7DK, 3310 Checkmate Drive, Anchorage 99508. Telephone number (907) 333-4693. Submissions to the paper should be typewritten or on IBM compatible formatted computer disks (5.25 or 3.5 inch). Graphic illustrations for articles are welcome.

AARC Invited To Victoria Contest in June '93

The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club received an invitation to send a team of contestants to the 3rd International Radio Sport Contest to be held in Victoria, BC in June, 1993.

The invitation was delivered personally by Evgeni Stavicky, President of the Khabarovsk chapter of the new Russian Ham League at the November 11th Board Meeting. The Club was also offered the opportunity to host the contest in 1995.

Evgeni, who received his US ham callsign KB7LJW during the 1989 Radio Sport contest in Portland, Oregon, was introduced as a special guest by Harley Steward, KL7IZZ. He spoke to the Board in Russian and his invitation and answers to questions from the Board were translated by Kenneth Steward, WL7BYL.

The Board voted to consider the offer to host the 1995 contest and will explore our ability to host a major international event in the coming months. An answer to the invitation was promised to Evgeni by the time his next trip to the States brings him to Anchorage in the Spring.

The contest next year will include an HF contest, a CW transmission and receiving contest, a Fox Hunt through a forested area near Victoria, and a DX pileup handling contest. The contest will be held on Field Day weekend and possibly under field or emergency power conditions.

Those who are interested in participating should contact AARC President Fred Wegner, KL7HFM.

Minutes From The November 6th General Meeting

By: NL7DL, Lil Marvin

The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club General Meeting was held on November 6, 1992 and was opened at 7:00PM by President Fred Wegner, KL7HFM.

The general membership voted to grant \$15,000.00 to the Alaska Pacific University Endowment Fund.

The AARC Ad Hoc Committee on Education has been put in operation. The initial meeting was held in mid-October. They will present a progress report at the first of the year.

Bill Beach, AL7MM, is the head of the Nominating Committee for the AARC June elections. Start thinking of possible victims for next June (Let's start with Bill!).

The Christmas Party will be held on December 4th. The party will be held at the APU Atwood Center in the third building on the left next to the one in which the meetings are being held. Set-up will begin at 5:00PM and eating will begin at 6:00PM. Turkeys, hams and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. There will be a potluck. You are asked to bring the following:

Novices: chocolate vegetables

Techs: chocolate salads

Generals: chocolate hot dishes

Advanced: chocolate hors d'oeuvres

Extras: chocolate deserts

The Christmas party is a family-oriented affair. Your little ones are more than welcome to join the grownups.

The program for November consisted of two guest speakers from Prime Cable. Gary Haynes, Vice President of technical Operations, discussed how Prime Cable operates both technically and administratively. He talked about high-definition television, fibreoptics, digital transmission and compression. Dave Smith, Technical Supervisor, discussed leakage and interference problems, and the causes and possible cures (?) for each. Both gentlemen answered questions from the membership after the discussion.

The usual raffle fixes were awarded. As usual, Lil did not win enough chocolate. the eatin' after the meetin' was held at Elmer's, once again.

Please remember to turn in Christmas raffle stubs and money to Lil before December 4th. Thanks!!

Respectfully Submitted,
Lil Marvin, NL7DL

A Wedding To Remember!

In the last issue of *The Anchorage Amateur*, Doug, KL7IKX, and Carol Dickenson invited the club's members to their Renewal of Marriage Vows. Doug explained in a packet message to the newsletter, that his memory was scrambled last year by his tumor operation and he could no longer remember his original wedding day.

To make it easier to remember this ceremony, Doug and Carol chose to renew their vows in a combined Methodist/Baha'i wedding ceremony on Friday The Thirteenth of November. The Dickenson's have long been members of the St. Johns United Methodist church, scene of the ceremony, and recently have became involved with the local Baha'i congregation.

To complicate matters, Doug had gone into the hospital earlier in the week with a staph infection in one leg. The doctors allowed him to be at his second wedding only if he promised to spend the honeymoon back in his hospital bed!

Doug was confined to a wheelchair for the ceremony and the festivities afterwards. Instead of using the wedding kneeler for the bride and groom to kneel on during the ceremony, Carol placed the kneeler under Doug's bad leg while he stayed in the wheelchair.

Among those in attendance with spouses and dates were KL7ITI, AL7MM, NL7DK, AL7MO, WL7BF and AL7ID. Several of the club's members were asked to take part in the readings from the Baha'i portion of the wedding.

Friends of the Dickenson's from the church congregations held a pot luck after the ceremony in honor of the newly-still-weds!

REMEMBER TO BUY YOUR 1992 FALL RAFFLE TICKETS BEFORE DECEMBER 4TH!!

First Prize ICOM 728 HF Transceiver
Second Prize ICOM P2AT VHF Handheld
Third Prize ICOM 229A 2M Mobile

Only 3500 Tickets Printed!
Drawing To Be Held At December Meeting
Winner Need Not Be Present To Win.

It Was The Night Before Contest

A Contest Carol

'Twas the night before Contest
and all through the house,
not a keyboard was stirring,
note even a mouse.

*The antennas hung by their masts in despair
with hopes that big signals soon would be there.
And the op's were nestled all snug in their beds,
while visions of DX danced in their heads.*

*Then at 00:00 UTC there rose such a clatter!
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter!
And what to my wondering eyes should appear,
but a Jolly Old Fellow - sending code loud and clear!*

*His fingers glowed with experience so rare,
he turned out great code with a brass pounder's flare.
More rapid than bullets, dots and dashes they came,
and he pounded and clicked and called them by name;*

*On Twenty! On Frequency! On-Zero Beat!
On Kenwood! On Icom! On QSO's Complete!*

*His eyes glazed over, fingers nimble and lean
from weekends and nights - his CW was mean!
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
soon gave me to know his score was ahead.*

*He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work
turning carrier into code, then turned with a jerk,
and laying his finger upon the brass key
he smiled and logged another - QSO number 923!*

*The QRM'ers; the dupes, they deleted,
the filters filtered, and the exchanges completed.
He made each contact, and waited for the final bell
with nary a bend, and all had gone well.*

*The contest was finished, the runs were concluded,
the log's last changes were even included.
And he exclaimed with a laugh and a good cheer
"Maybe not this time, but wait 'til next year".*

-- Original by John, K7FD
Lincoln County (OR) ARC
December, 1991

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

Cleanup Down On the Antenna Farm

(Continued from page 2)

They wrote to me each step of the way and kept each utility aware that they were watching the proceedings. A copy of each letter to one of the utilities is included. Each utility received a similar letter and copies were sent to the ombudsman and the Public Utilities Commission.

Municipal Light and Power
1200 East First
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Sir,

Enclosed is a sketch of my property at 1540 West Fifteenth. It shows power lines, telephone lines and Prime Cable lines crossing my property on their way to my neighbors houses. Please reroute the power lines so that do not cross and/or encroach on my property. I am requesting that this be done within the next 45 days.

Yours truly,

Neil E. Thalaker
1540 West Fifteenth
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Telephone 276-7106

Spider Antenna with separate detachable resonators for 10 through 75 and 80 meters. Ground radial kit for all bands, two mounting brackets (one for coax and one for single wire transmission line). Asking \$275, Negotiable. NL7VP, Ed, 243-4348.

ICOM IC-2400A Dual Band mobile transceiver. Receives 138-174 & 440-450 Mhz. Transmits 140-150 & 440-450. Power out, 144 - Hi 45W, Lo 5W; 440-450 - Hi 35W, Lo 5W. New, never installed, in original carton. \$500. KL7PG, Harold, 248-3308.

AARC Program Log
(Continued from page 1)

made possible by the use of upconverting the entire system to the CARS microwave band for a 16 mile jump to Eagle River.

Prime Cable purchased the system in 1989 from Sonic and built another 200 miles of system. The new additions included putting cable underground on the hillside and extending the system north to Peters Creek in cooperation with the Mat-Su telephone company.

Due to an aggressive building program and some mistakes, the company had some public relations problems. Gary welcomed the opportunity to be speaking to the club on an amicable basis.

Both Gary and Dave said that if we suspect interference from the cable system, to contact the company. If they receive a false alarm, they are willing to work on finding the true cause; if the system can leak out, then other signal sources can leak in and degrade the system's performance.

The system now has approximately 832 miles of trunk and feeder lines. About 60 percent is underground and the remainder is pole mounted.

Prime has installed two miles of single mode fiber optic cable from the Rural Alaskan Television Network (RATNet) where all of the local television stations are interlinked. This allows them to take a clear signal from each station and put it onto the system.

Turning from the ground to the sky, Prime Cable is using two antennas to receive satellite supplied programming. The main antenna is a ten meter Torus antenna that looks like a billboard. Just to the south of the antenna is a building that duplicates the slant of the antenna where the electronics for

the antenna system is located.

The Torus 'sees' 20 degrees of the sky, from 118 to 138 degrees west longitude. This antenna has five degrees of splash. The second antenna is a steerable conical horn which is currently looking at the Galaxy III satellite.

In the future for cable television and for the local system we can expect to see High Definition Television (HDTV), compression of signals into smaller bandwidths and increased use of fibre optics. Gary expects the FCC to begin testing of five different HDTV systems in the Spring of 1994.

Fibre backbones for the distribution system will enable the cable companies to reduce the number of noise inducing amplifiers between the headend site and the subscriber. The systems will also be able to design the distribution networks to act as ring nodes; this will let them feed the signals from either end of the system to get around any breaks that may occur.

Dave Smith then took over the podium to discuss signal leakage problems with the audience. Since July, 1990, cable television systems have had to show annual compliance with signal leakage regulations. Locating and correcting leakage problems is of great concern to the company.

On their forward channels, 54 to 400 Mhz, the frequencies of concern to both the amateurs and the company are at 146 Mhz, channels 17 and 18, at 220 Mhz, channels 23 and 24, and between 430 and 450 Mhz.

Dave and his crew is also especially concerned with problems in the aircraft band from 108 to 138, in the mid-VHF land mobile segment just above our two meter band and in their reverse channels located between 5 and 30 Mhz.

The reverse channels are used for feeds to the headend site from the University, the School District and the Loussac Library building. The feeds are for the community and educational channels. The reverse channels are susceptible to HF signals from the 40 though 10 meter bands at a leakage point.

The worst leak they have measured on the system was 1500 mv per meter. This was coming from a pedestal that had been run over by a snow plow. The signal was being radiated by a stub end of the feeder cable that terminated in the pedestal. The majority of the leaks, 70-80 percent, are found on the drop lines.

The interference on local channels is usually caused by the signal transmitted by the station getting into the cable system at a leakage point. On channel six, interference is usually caused by the audio from local radio station KRU (88.1mhz) being picked up where there is a leak in the system. Channel 19 is affected by cabs and other landmobiles in the area.

Dave's crew uses specialized equipment to detect leaks. The cable system transmits an amplitude modulated signal on 113.225 Mhz. When the crews are driving around, they listen to that frequency to see if they can spot a leak. Rob Wilson, AL7KK, pointed out that the FAA is using two test frequencies very close to the 113.225 Mhz signal.

He suggested to Dave that it might be possible that the FAA tests could make it difficult for Prime Cable to locate a leak, or make them think that there was a leak when the system wasn't really leaking. Dave was going to check with Rob on the frequencies for Prime Cable the following week. Dave can be contacted at 786-9338 if you want to report a potential leak problem.

RADIO ETIQUETTE: TWO METERS, or what to do with that handheld you're getting for Christmas

Welcome to 2 Meters and The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club.

By now, you are ready to get your feet wet using 2 meters and to talk to the scores of other Amateurs who are eager to greet you with open squelch, from Fairbanks to Homer.

You may know something about the service already. Most of us got started by association with other Hams. You learn that way too.

But we would like you to take a moment and familiarize yourself with what is called: "2 Meter Protocol".

Protocol is another way of saying operating etiquette or procedures. In the Ham Community, most of these are "home-made" and have been established for many years.

Regardless of the type of radio you are using or going to use, each will result in a different level of quality of service, depending on your location and how you use it.

1. After you have selected your frequency, and before keying up, listen for a few seconds to make sure it is not in use or go ahead and ask: "Is the frequency clear?" The reason for this is due to the following:

During a QSO, we allow a second or two in between our transmissions for those who wish to join in or, to just make a quick call to an awaiting party and then QSY. They may also have an EMERGENCY!

This is a courtesy-not a rule. Remember: protocol is methods and practices. We hope it never

happens but, YOU might be the one trying to get in the word "HELP" someday.

2. Speaking of repeaters, how do we talk to them? Easy—it's automatic. You key your radio and call the person you wish and the repeater does the rest, keeping in mind again, location and type of radio you're using.

3. When accessing one of the repeaters, give both your radio and the repeater a second to "open up". Otherwise, your party's callsign may be chopped in half. I mean, who the heck is "--HIU" anyway?

4. Also on 2 meters, plain language is used with the exception of "Q" codes. No other slang or codes are recognized. This reason is simple: Which code system or "slanguage" will you be using and, do I also know how to use it? Protocol here is plain language.

5. ID at the beginning and end of each QSO and every ten minutes. A host of Control Operators are listening in 'round the clock to help you during this learning process. They are not enforcers. Rather, helpers--just in case you may need some assistance.

6. Remember that others might also be waiting to use the frequency. Remember the Energizer Rabbit? "It keeps on going and going and going.". Plus the repeater needs to "cool down" periodically anyway.

7. If you have tried unsuccessfully to access a repeater, change your location and try again. You might be interfering with another call in progress because you cannot "hear" well from that location.

8. And be aware of "background" noises around you. The TV, radio, your dog barking. You're used to them and we are not.

We hope these tips will make Ham radio an enjoyable experience for you and those to whom you will be talking.

Again, Welcome to the AARC and Happy Metering!

Chuck Frenzley WL7DZ

Christmas Party December 4th (Continued from page 1)

There will be a number of programs on the program as Activities Manager AL7MO, Richard Mote, has arranged for his time machine to bring back Christmas on Old Time Radio, or at least his old time radio console.

The program schedule for KLAA (a background station) starts with Duffy's Tavern at 5:30PM for those who arrive early; followed by The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes at 6PM and A Child's Christmas In Wales at 6:30. A medley of Christmas music will fill out the schedule until the end of the Party.

There will also be several reports from the Sniper's Group, the Bush Net and the Motley Group if the world famous Alaskan DXpeditioner, KL7AUS decides to leave his QTH at North Pole, Alaska to visit the party.

The only place you will be able to hear the time machine radio station KLAA will be at the Party and on the KLAA QRP Net.

SEE YOU THERE!!

AARC GENERAL MEETINGS are held on the first Friday evening of each month in Room 102 of the Carr-Gottstein Building on the Alaska Pacific University Campus.

The campus is located at 4101 University Drive and Bragaw Streets. Parking is available only in the lot to the northeast of the building.

The meetings begin at 7:00 PM and visitors are always welcome! The AARC legendary raffle is open to everyone.

AARC BOARD MEETINGS are held on the second Wednesday evening of each month in Room 104 of the Carr-Gottstein Building on the APU campus.

The meetings begin at 7:00 PM and are open to all club members and visitors.

AARC MID MONTH SOCIALS are held on the third Wednesday evening of each month (except June, November and December). They begin at 7:00 PM at the Royal Fork Buffet Restaurant, 800 Northway Drive. Visitors are always welcome!

THE KL7AA REPEATERS sponsored by the club are on 146.94 (at minus .600), 224.94 (-1.600) and 444.7 (+5.000). The two meter repeater located on top of Flattop Mt. requires a 100 hz tone for access.

The satellite receiver located on Government Hill does not require a tone. The 125 cm repeater, also on Flattop Mt. and the 70 cm repeater located at the South Central Radio site do not require tone for access. The repeater trustee is William Reiter, KL7ITI. Paul Spatzek, WL7BF is the contact for the VHF/UHF committee.

FREE LICENSE EXAMS

are held on the first Wednesday evening of the month at 6:30PM in the Carr-Gottstein Bldg on the APU campus and on the third Wednesday evening of the month in Eagle River at 7PM in the basement of the VFW Hall.

For more information contact VEC Director, Roger Hansen, KL7HFQ at 892-6365.

ANCHORAGE ARES NET

The Anchorage area Amateur Radio Emergency Services net is held each Thursday evening at 8:00 PM on the KL7ION repeater on 147.3 (+.600). Net Control is Lil Marvin, NL7DL and alternate NCS station is KL7IO.

The Westlink Amateur Radio report, Swap N Shop and the Parka Net follow the ARES net on the same frequency.

ANCHORAGE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC. - PO BOX 101987 - ANCHORAGE, AK 99510-1987

NAME _____ CALL SIGN _____

ADDRESS _____ LICENSE CLASS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____ LICENSE EXPIRATION DATE _____

PHONE: HOME _____ BUSINESS _____ ARRL MEMBER? YES NO LIFE

YOUR STATION CAPABILITIES: HF VHF UHF MOBILE HF MOBILE VHF MOBILE UHF

AMSAT/OSCAR RTTY PACKET OTHER

Do you have other special interest in Amateur Radio? _____ MICROPROCESSOR/DIGITAL

TRANSMITTER HUNTS FIELD DAY FLEA MARKET
OTHER

NOTE: Membership period is one year from date you pay. Grace period is thirty days after your due date.

DUES: \$20.00 Regular \$25.00 Family \$10.00 Student
Life memberships available; contact Lance Dunbar, AL7BK for information at (H) 337-6297 or (W) 561-5457

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please remember, the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club benefits financially if you enter your ARRL membership renewal through the club.

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29